

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 33

By Bone

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Fire Chief Henry Wiley Preston of Lebanon.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the untimely death of Henry Preston, the city of Lebanon's Fire Chief; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Preston was an exemplary public servant and consummate firefighting professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Fire Chief Henry Preston was a highly respected member of the greater Lebanon community; and

WHEREAS, flags at Lebanon City Hall and all offices of Wilson County government, were lowered to half-staff in memory of Chief Preston; and

WHEREAS, Fire Chief Preston began his remarkable service with the Lebanon Fire Department in 1964; he was promoted to Captain in 1966, to Assistant Chief in 1984, and finally to Chief in 1994; and

WHEREAS, Henry Wiley Preston served with acumen as Chief of the Lebanon Fire Department; he earned the respect of the firefighters under his charge and his fellow citizens for the exemplary quality of his work and his unswerving dedication to duty; and

WHEREAS, Lebanon Mayor Don Fox remembered Chief Preston as, “one of the greatest field generals in firefighting.” Mayor Fox also admired Fire Chief Preston’s dedication by stating, he “went out on every fire, every call, no matter what time of day, what time of night”; and

WHEREAS, Chief Preston, always deeply concerned about the safety of his firefighters and the efficiency of his department, placed computers in the station and fire trucks, and acquired a thermal imaging camera, which allows firefighters to locate people in dense smoke; and

WHEREAS, Engineer Jason Partlow noted that Chief Henry Preston was a link to the past when firefighters moved up the ranks to become leaders; at the scene of fires, Chief Preston not only assumed command, he also would often pick up a hose and fight the flames alongside his firefighters; and

WHEREAS, Henry Preston was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Chief Henry Preston enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Arah Preston, the District 24 Wilson County Commissioner and Ward 3 Lebanon City Councilor, and was the proud father of daughter, Julie Preston and son, Ray Preston; and

WHEREAS, he will also be greatly missed by his parents, Raymond and Nora Elsie “Bill” Preston; his brother, Jack (Josie) Preston; his sister, Ann (Abed) Halim; his niece, Beckie (Donn) Boughton; his nephews, James (Tony) Atwell, Jason Preston, Ramzi Halim; and his three great nieces; and

WHEREAS, Chief Preston was preceded in death by his brother Charles Raymond Preston; and

WHEREAS, a member of the First Baptist Church, Chief Preston served his church and Lord and Savior by serving in numerous capacities and by living a life to the true teachings of Christ; and

WHEREAS, in his spare time he enjoyed collecting memorabilia with firefighting themes. He also built "Little Squirt," the world's shortest and smallest working fire engine, which was inducted into the Guinness Book of World Records in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Fire Chief Henry Preston leaves behind an indelible legacy of progress and integrity in his firefighting career, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Fire Chief Henry Wiley Preston, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his stalwart commitment to his family and community, and the courage and honor with which he served the Lebanon Fire Department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Fire Chief Henry Wiley Preston.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.